GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2639
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2016
Inclusion of Languages
Manjhi Shri Hari

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, language and State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has adopted any criteria/norms for inclusion of languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said norms have been followed/adhered to by the Government;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the manner in which the Government distinguishes between dialect and new language before according it the status of language; and

(e) the details of the benefits likely to accrue to any language after inclusion in the Eighth Schedule?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIREN RIJIJU)

(a): The following 22 languages are included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution:-

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(1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Bodo, (4) Dogri, (5) Gujarati, (6) Hindi, (7) Kannada, (8) Kashmiri, (9) Konkani, (10) Maithili, (11) Malayalam, (12) Manipuri, (13) Marathi, (14) Nepali, (15) Oriya, (16) Punjabi, (17) Sanskrit, (18) Santhali (19) Sindhi, (20) Tamil, (21) Telugu and (22) Urdu

Many of these languages are spoken in several States, and their use is not restricted by State boundaries.

(b to d): As the evolution of dialects and languages is dynamic, influenced by socio-eco-political developments, it is difficult to fix any criterion for languages to be included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Two attempts, through the Pahwa (1996) and Sitakant Mohapatra (2003) Committees to evolve such criteria have not borne fruit.

"Language" is a socio-cultural-geographical construct in the sense that all languages begin as dialects/varieties/mother tongues but due to various socio-economic-political reasons one of the varieties of any language develops into or acquires the status of a standard variety. "Language" may thus be defined as the standard variety, so that those speaking related varieties may be deemed to be speaking the standard variety. For example, Awadhi, Braj Bhasha and Khadi Boli are different varieties which constitute what is known as Hindi today and Hindi may, therefore, be considered the standard language for these varieties.

There are no linguistic criteria for differentiating between a language and a dialect. Socially, a dialect may gradually evolve into a language and acquire the status of a language.

(e): If included in the Eighth Schedule, the following benefits are likely to accrue to the language:-

(i) The language shall be permitted as alternative media for the All India and higher Central Services examinations after ascertaining the views of the Union Public Service Commission.

(ii) Sahitya Akademy may institute awards, special promotion programmes etc. at their discretion for these languages.

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